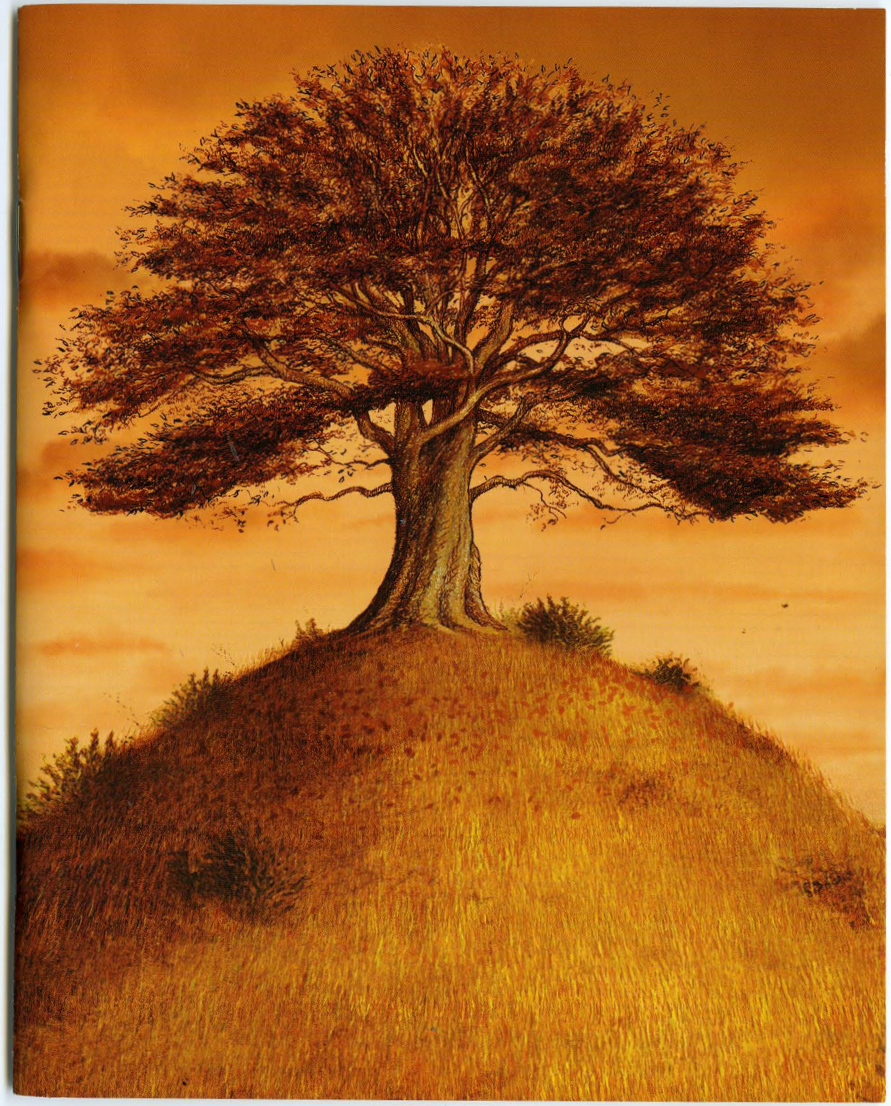

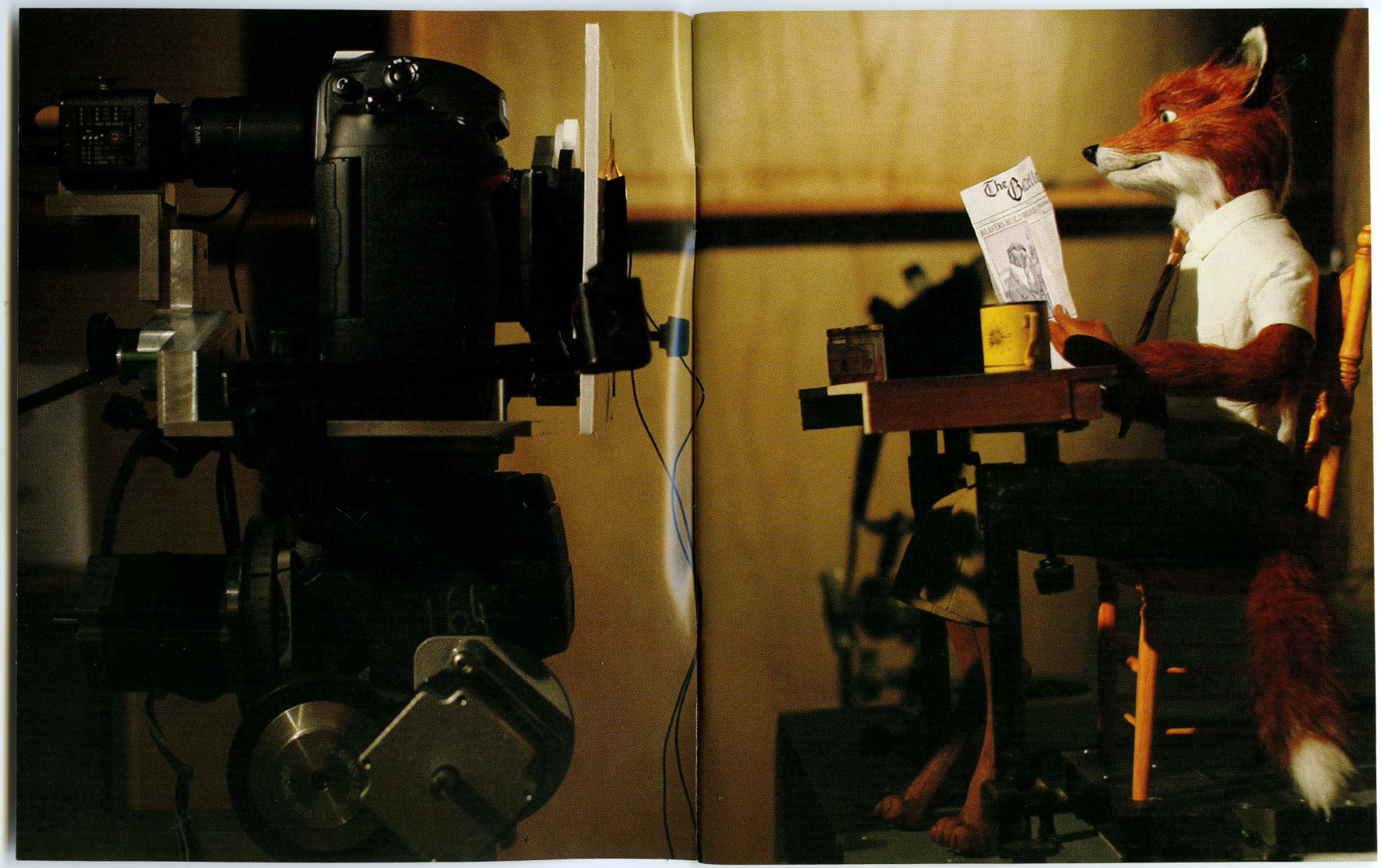

A

B

A. Color swatches used during production

B. Interior of Fox tree

C. Miniature newspaper

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C

A

FOX
JULY 26 '06

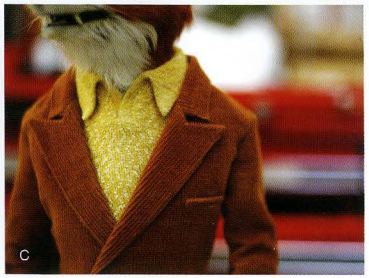
A. Drawing of Mr. Fox by Eric Anderson

B. Fabric samples for Mr. Fox's suit

C. Detail of Mr. Fox's suit

D. Armature skeleton for Mr. Fox puppet

B



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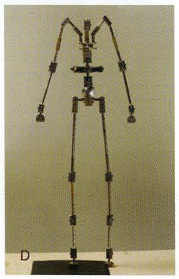


D

Chapters

1. Chicken Stealers by Trade
2. Two Years Later (12 Fox-years)
3. A New Tree
4. Kristofferson
5. Mr. Fox Has a Plan
6. Master Plan, Phase One (Boggis Chicken House #1)
7. Bunce's Refrigerated Smokehouse (Master Plan, Phase Two)
8. Bean's Secret Cider Cellar (Master Plan, Phase Three)
9. The Shooting
10. The Terrible Tractors
11. The Siege Begins
12. One Human-hour Later
13. Cider Flood at the Flint-Mine
14. The Sewer
15. The Wrong Fox
16. A Go-for-broke Rescue Mission
17. Master "Plan B"
18. Bean Annex
19. *Canis lupus*
20. Three Days Later (2½ Fox-weeks)
21. Boggis, Bunce and Bean International Supermarkets
22. Color Bars

E

E. Character drawing by Félicie Haymoz

F–G. Experimental version of Mr. Fox microscale puppet

H. Mold for mini-micro Mr. Fox puppet

F

G

H

Cast

Mr. Fox	Mrs. Fox	Ash	Badger	Kylie
George CLOONEY	Meryl STREEP	Jason SCHWARTZMAN	Bill MURRAY	Wally WOLODARSKY

Character drawings by Félicie Haymoz and Huy Vu

Kristofferson	Franklin Bean	Rat	Coach Skip	Petey
Eric ANDERSON	Michael GAMBON	Willem DAFOE	Owen WILSON	Jarvis COCKER

Credits

Directed by	Wes ANDERSON
Written for the Screen by	Wes ANDERSON
	Noah BAUMBACH
Produced by	Allison ABBATE
	Scott RUDIN
	Wes ANDERSON
	Jeremy DAWSON
Executive Producers	Steven RALES
	Arnon MILCHAN
Animation Director	Mark GUSTAFSON
Director of Photography	Tristan OLIVER
Production Designer	Nelson LOWRY
Music Composed and Conducted by	Alexandre DESPLAT
Supervising Editor	Andrew WEISBLUM
Music Supervisor	Randall POSTER
Puppets Fabricated by	MACKINNON and SAUNDERS

A. Miniature painting from Badger's office by Turlo Griffin

B. Mr. Fox at Badger's desk

C. Beaver dam/ law offices in the workshop

Next page: Animating the cider flood

Vulpine Nature

By ERICA WAGNER

"Boggis and Bunce and Bean / One fat, one short, one lean. / These horrible crooks / So different in looks / Were nonetheless equally mean." Roald Dahl's wicked limerick at the expense of the three ghastly poultry farmers in his concise and razor-sharp 1970 children's novel "Fantastic Mr. Fox" echoes through Wes Anderson's 2009 film version of the book, the English children's voices that chant the lines a reference to its source. Those disembodied voices are as good an illustration as any for the way this film, the director's remarkable first foray into animation, respects the essence of the work from which it is adapted and yet creates something entirely new, keeping the original at a careful distance but always just within earshot. What's so charming about Anderson's take on "Fantastic Mr. Fox," which deals with the struggle of George Clooney's eponymous hero to be an upright member of society and contain the animal nature that lives inside his natty corduroy suit, is the way in which, both visually and in terms of storytelling technique, you never know what's around the corner, but everything feels organic, nothing seems like a gimmick. It's of a piece with the warm individualism that runs through all his films. He is a director with great empathy for folks—in this case, they happen to be animals—who don't fit completely comfortably into the worlds they find themselves in. Without ever lecturing us, he leads us to question those worlds, and the ones we find ourselves in too.

It could be argued that Dahl's "Fantastic Mr. Fox" is itself a frisky update of Beatrix Potter's Peter Rabbit tales, in which talking animals are also adventurous and neatly clothed. In Dahl's book, Mr. Fox steals happily from the three Bs on behalf of Mrs. Fox and their little foxes until Bean and his cohort of greasy accomplices scheme to revenge this larceny by digging them out of their hole and killing them all. Boggis, Bunce, and Bean, with their thousands of chickens, geese, and turkeys, are factory farmers who'll let nothing—certainly not one wily fox—stand in the way of profit; their consumption of their own product is repellent, in Dahl's characteristically savage style. Bunce eats nothing but doughnuts and goose livers: "He mashed the livers into a disgusting paste and then stuffed the paste into the doughnuts.

This diet gave him a tummy-ache and a beastly temper." The villains in Dahl's work are never too hard to discern.

Heroes and villains are, broadly speaking, not the people who populate Anderson's films. His are very specific worlds, eccentric but always emotionally real; his Mr. Fox has more in common with such flailing father figures as Royal Tenenbaum of "The Royal Tenenbaums" (2001) and Captain Duffy Sharp from "Moonrise Kingdom" (2012) than he does with Dahl's gleeful predator. Dahl's Mrs. Fox treats Mr. Fox's occupation—chicken, goose, and turkey thief—as the natural order of things; Anderson's Mrs. Fox (Meryl Streep) wishes there were another way, even though she must, finally, acknowledge a fox's essential nature. Anderson's change of Mrs. Fox from the carefree mother of a litter of four to the anxious mother of an only child speaks volumes about the differences between these two creative sensibilities, and about Anderson's keen ability to adapt a tale to his own quirky requirements. Here, the Foxes' son, Ash (Jason Schwartzman), is a high-strung, moody loner who is not pleased when his cousin, the wonderfully named Kristofferson (Eric Anderson), comes to stay. In both book and film, Mr. Fox has his beautiful tail shot off, but only in Anderson's film does it

become a detached image of his foxhood, worn in triumph as a furry necktie by Farmer Bean—and a cause of near disaster when Ash attempts a tail rescue with Kristofferson, whose charm and agility are a wonder to all who meet him, to Ash's intense dismay.

These are human dynamics in fox fur—and this is an ensemble piece, voiced by many actors who are stalwarts of Anderson's work. Mr. Fox's friendship with his long-suffering lawyer, Badger (Bill Murray), is both an expansion and a subversion of a relationship barely sketched in the book. The creation of real relationships within a context that appears—on the surface, at least—to be contrived or unreal is exactly what Anderson does best. How better to express the conflicts we all feel between our inner natures and what the world expects of us than through a group of animals that must negotiate the dangerous human world? As Anderson's Mr. Fox asks himself, "How can a fox ever be happy without a chicken in its teeth?" Watching "Fantastic Mr. Fox," you end up thinking that's true not just of foxes.

Which all sounds terribly serious, of course. In fact, the whole is leavened by zaniness. This is especially true of the music, from the opening bars of "The Ballad of Davy Crockett" to the ebullient zippy-zye, zappy-

A. Concept artwork for foxhole kitchen by Turlo Griffin

B. Squirrel workmen puppets

C. Concept artwork for foxhole exterior by Turlo Griffin

D. Ash puppet waiting on set

A

A. Agnes puppet

B. Mold for Kristofferson's chemistry lab goggles

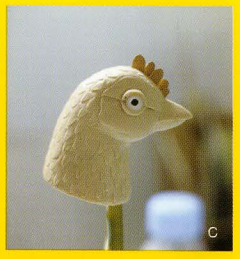
B

zoo ballad performed by Jarvis Cocker's Petey in honor of Mr. Fox's skills. (It's hardly surprising that Michael Gambon's Bean disapproves. "That's just bad songwriting! You wrote a *bad song,* Petey!") Like the lightning that's a motif of Mrs. Fox's landscape paintings—which calls to mind the lightning strike at the end of "Moonrise Kingdom"—a happy silliness electrifies the movie, from the explanation by Coach Skip (Owen Wilson) of the convoluted rules of whack-bat (which is something like cricket, baseball, and soccer put together—it's a wonder, really, that it hasn't caught on) to Willem Dafoe's acrobatically murderous rat. There is almost literally nothing in this film that isn't delightful or surprising.

So is this a kids' film or a grown-ups' film? An English film (the landscapes are certainly English, and, in the classic tradition of silver-screen baddies, the wicked farmers remain firmly so) or an American one (like the rest of its cast)? Who says you—or Anderson—have to choose? The warm, foxy tones of the delicate stop-motion animation create a completely particular space for the characters to inhabit—and like all the best work that's accessible to children, it offers another layer (many other layers) to the adult viewer. My son was nine when the film came out; he loved it because it was a great cartoon, and that was enough for him. Now that he's thirteen—just a little older than Ash, at least in human years—it has changed for him. He has thought about what it means when his parents change their jobs and their lives; he has considered how crucial it is to excel at whack-bat—and what you might do if you don't. His mother thinks about these things too. Fiction tells the truth about life—just in a different, an often unexpected, form.

There's no disjunction between Anderson's live-action work and this foray into animation. His idiosyncratic sensibility and eye for detail are a perfect fit with the handmade aesthetics of stop-motion animation. Watching "Fantastic Mr. Fox" is sheer delight for the close attention to every aspect of the look and feel, from those lightning-lit paintings of Mrs. Fox's to the way the foxes' fur rises in a draft of wind; from the neatly sewn badge on the dastardly rat's hand-knit sweater to the cotton-wool blast of an explosion. Mark Gustafson, animation director; Nelson Lowry, production designer; and Tristan Oliver, director of photography, created a look for this film that is perfectly unique. I'm an American, like Anderson, and so like him I read Dahl's book in the original American edition, illustrated by Donald Chaffin. Anderson has said that Chaffin's tidy, highly detailed drawings were the "first inspiration" for the film—indeed, you can see a nearly identical front cover to the one on the edition that uses Chaffin's work in the opening sequence. In recent years, and on both sides of the Atlantic, Quentin Blake's illustrations have come to be most associated with Dahl, but it's clear why Anderson, with his feel for the telling detail, would be drawn to Chaffin's funny but orderly style.

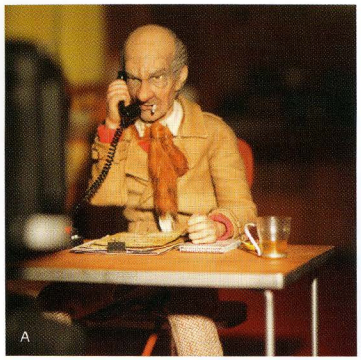
Do we ever really wonder whether Mr. Fox might fail to save his family—and beat the wretched Boggis, Bunce, and Bean—in this film? Perhaps not: the safety net of a children's story is the guaranteed happy ending. But we don't know how he'll get there, or what he'll discover about himself on the way. Dahl's hero makes no bones about the sort of fox he thinks he is; it's no surprise to him when his wife says, "MY HUSBAND IS


C

C. Chicken puppet in progress in the puppet hospital

D. Cider-bottle-shaped Mr. Fox puppet

D

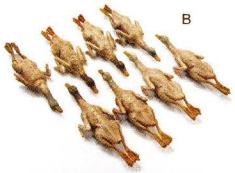


A

A. Bean on set in his caravan

B. Bunce's geese

C. Boggis and his farm



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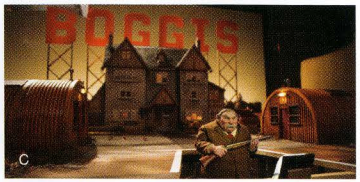


C

A FANTASTIC FOX"—while Anderson's Mr. Fox is plagued by existential doubt: "I think I have this thing where I need everybody to think I'm the greatest—the quote-unquote fantastic Mr. Fox—and if they aren't completely knocked out, dazzled, and kind of intimidated by me, then I don't feel good about myself." So here's a grown-up hero in a kids' film, one whose doubt makes him endearing. Since we know he must defeat the farmers, conflict has to come from somewhere else. For Wes Anderson's film, and for Wes Anderson's Mr. Fox, that conflict comes from the most recognizable place to filmgoers of every age—it comes from within himself.

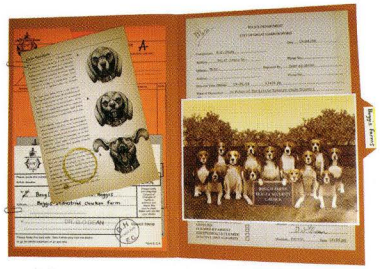
Erica Wagner was born in New York and lives in London. "Gravity," her collection of short stories, was published by Granta in 1997; "Ariel's Gift," a book about Ted Hughes's "Birthday Letters," was published by W. W. Norton in 2001; and her novel, "Seizure," was published by W. W. Norton in 2007. She is the Eccles British Library Writer in Residence for 2014 and is working on a biography of Washington Roebling, the man who built the Brooklyn Bridge.

D

D. Bunce puppet in its delivery bag from puppet makers Mackinnon and Saunders

E. Mr. Fox's beagle dossier

F. The puppet hospital



E

F

A–B. Gipsy House

C. The Hairy Hut

A version of this article originally appeared in the August 18, 2002, edition of the "New York Times."

Welcome to the Dahl House

By WES ANDERSON

My brothers and I grew up reading Roald Dahl's stories. Our mother bought us paper *ex libris* at the St. Francis book fair, and we used to steal each other's copies of "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory," "James and the Giant Peach," and "The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar"—then carefully rip out the other brothers' labels and replace them with our own. Dahl was our favorite author.

For me the best were "Danny the Champion of the World" and "Fantastic Mr. Fox."

Last year I decided to find out what it would take to make a movie from "Mr. Fox." I inquired through a series of intermediaries, and it was eventually arranged for me to meet with Dahl's wife, Liccy, who runs the Dahl estate and helps to produce the films, plays, operas, etc., that have been adapted from his books.

She is a very charming and energetic woman, with an infectious enthusiasm for her husband's work. She invited me to Gipsy House. I knew about Dahl's residence in Great Missenden, near Oxford, and I was especially eager to see the tiny hut where he wrote for four hours each day in an armchair with a green-felt-upholstered board across his lap for a desk.

I went to Gipsy House in March, and it was drenched in mud. Liccy gave me a pair of rubber boots and one of Dahl's old fishing hats and took me around the property. There is a gigantic beech tree at the end of a fox run, which I immediately recognized from "Fantastic Mr. Fox." There is a painted gypsy caravan under a tree, which I had seen in dust-jacket photographs. There is a stone half buried on the edge of the drive with the word "GIPSY" carved into it.

Liccy showed me into Dahl's famous writing hut. There is part of a bone from his hip on the table next to his first metal hip replacement, which didn't take. There is a ten-pound ball of aluminum foil made from several years of Cadbury chocolate wrappers. There is a little surgical valve he invented that saved his son from hydrocephalus.

That night Liccy left me to examine Dahl's manuscripts in an office next to the guesthouse. An archivist made me wash my hands twice with special soap

A

B

A. Miniature Hairy Hut

B. Props made for the film based on Dahl's collection

C. Kylie and Mr. Fox in Mr. Fox's study

D. Side table in Mr. and Mrs. Fox's bedroom

Opposite: Inside Roald Dahl's writing hut

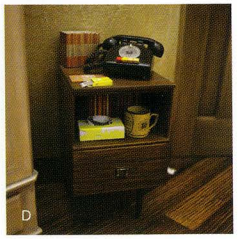
and told me to close all the curtains and lock the door when I was finished. I was alone with pages and pages of handwritten drafts with Dahl's sketches in the margins. His train of thought seemed to be arranged very neatly in front of me. I really did feel as if I were in his presence, paying him a posthumous visit.

The next morning I walked with Liccy across a bridge over the motorway to a church and the cemetery where Dahl is buried.

There is a monument in the graveyard consisting of a round wooden bench on a stone platform. Each of Dahl's eight children and stepchildren has a seat on the bench with his or her name carved into the back: Olivia, Tessa, Theo, Ophelia, Neisha, Charlotte, Lucy, and Lorina. We wanted to sit for a while, but the bench was wet.

Liccy and I walked back to the house in the rain.

C



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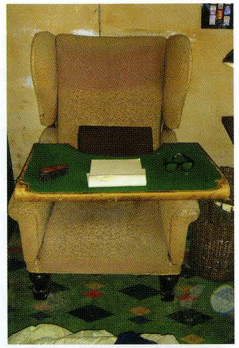
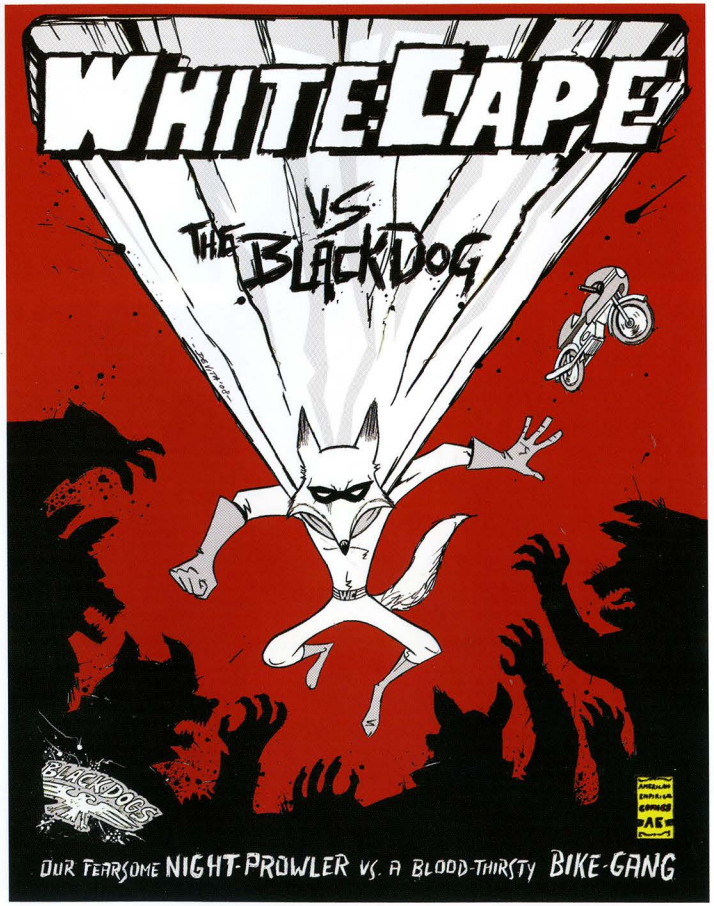


The following comic book, "White Cape," appears as a prop in "Fantastic Mr. Fox." It was created by Christian De Vita.



?
DEVITA '08

THE SECRET SOCIETY OF FARMERS HAS SET A BOUNTY ON WHITE CAPE!
THAT MONEY'S AS GOOD AS OURS... WHITE CAPE IS DEAD!
DEVITA '08
NO!
SUDDENLY...

CRASH!
- DE VITA '04 -

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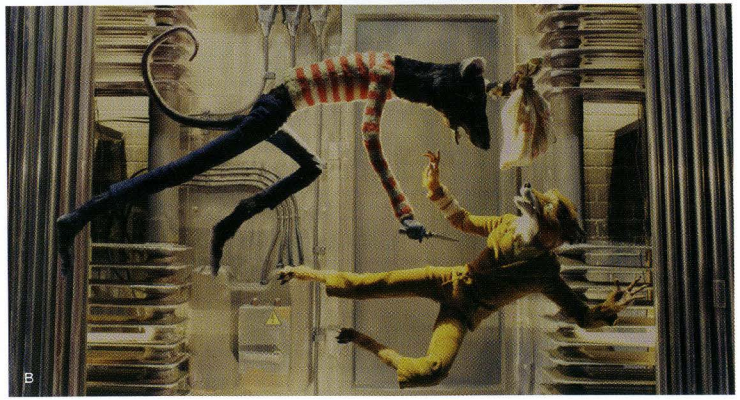

About the Transfer

"Fantastic Mr. Fox" is presented in its original aspect ratio of 1.85:1. Black bars at the top and bottom of the screen are normal for this format. The film was shot with Nikon D3 digital cameras with Canon lenses, and the entire production was completed in a fully digital workflow. The final color-corrected files were output to Rec. 709 high-definition color space for Blu-ray and DVD release.

The film features a fully digital soundtrack. The 5.1 surround audio for this release was mastered at 24-bit from the original digital audio master files using Pro Tools HD.

Transfer supervisor: Wes Anderson
Colorist: Max Horton/Technicolor London
Blu-ray mastering: Radius 60, Los Angeles
DVD mastering: Gentuza, Inc., Rochester, NY

C

D

A. Full-scale Bean puppet with half-scale Kristofferson

B. Fox vs. Rat

C. Miniature typewriter

D. Tranquilizing dust

E. Mole in sewer control room

A

B

C

A–C. Test photos of the shoot-out at Bean Annex

D. Motorcycle rigged for driving

D

Special Thanks

This release would not have been possible without the generous participation of Wes Anderson.

Thanks also to: Jeremy Dawson; Ben Adler; American Empirical Pictures; William Becker, Brian Belovarac, Laura Coxson, Sarah Finklea/Janus Films; Jim Berkus; Martin Biltcliffe and the City of London School; Jón "Jónsi" Þór Birgisson; John Bridcut; Edward Bursch; Brian Carmody; Melanie Cecka, Sherri Feldman, Nancy Hinkel/Random House; Samuel Cheney; George Clooney; Amanda Conquy; Payton Curtis; Willem Dafoe; Liccy Dahl; Luke Kelly; De Lane Lea; Grant Delin; Jessica Dolinger; Merrill Drillings; Louise Forbes, William Tyler/Sony Mobile; Janet Gorman; Dominic Gregory; Patricia Grey; Steve Griffin; Turlo Griffin; John Gudelj/Subtext Subtitling; Janet Hicks; Celia and Inigo Holman; Dean Holmes; Wendy Kress; Tyson Kubota; David Leach; Vesna Milankovic/Mentorn Media; Ray Lewis; Greg Lotus, Terry Marcello/McCann Erickson; Candy Marlowe; Sean McManus/Harper Collins; Casey Moore; Bill Murray; Octavia Peissel; Steve Perkins; Randall Poster; Isabelle Reynolds; Lauren Ro; Roald Dahl Museum and Story Centre; Dar Ronge; J. Anthony Ruffo; Jake Ryan and Jeremy Logan; Gina Schlueter; Eric Skillman; Claire Stiefel; Meryl Streep; Mary Sullivan/Penguin Group; Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment; Erica Wagner; Andy Weisblum; Rachel White; Alan Yentob

Acknowledgments

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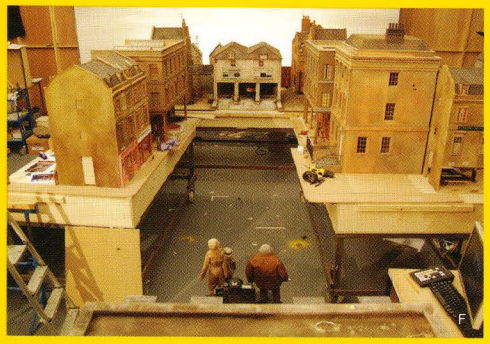

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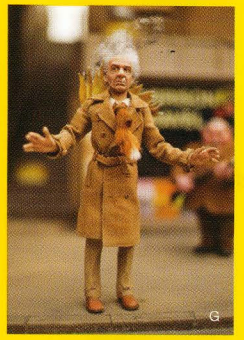

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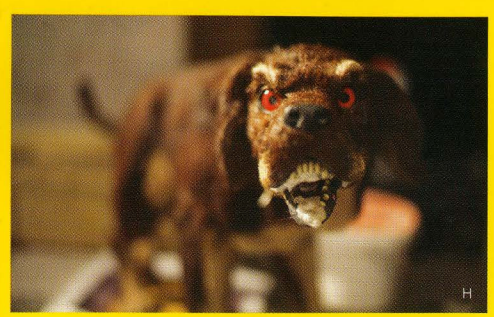

H

E. Ash in new bandit hat

F. Town square set

G. Bean on fire

H. Spitz the beagle foams at the mouth (a mixture of tiny glass beads and wax).

A

A. Character drawings by Félicie Haymoz

B. Sneaking into the supermarket

Production Credits

Producer: Susan Arosteguy • Coproducer: Molly Cooper • Executive producers: Peter Becker, Kim Hendrickson, Fumiko Takagi, Jonathan Turell • Technical director: Lee Kline • Director of production: Angie Bucknell • Director of engineering for digital media: Chris Zembower • Subtitle supervisor: Brett Sharlow • Research director: Alexandre Mabilon • Production associate: Elizabeth Pauker • Supplements editor: Edward Bursch

ART

Art director: Sarah Habibi • Cover painting by: Turlo Griffin • Designer: F. Ron Miller • Photography: Ray Lewis • Art production coordinator: William Brese • Art assistant: Julie Sussman • Videographics manager: Shayne Christiansen

EDITORIAL

Editorial director: Elizabeth Helfgott • Editorial manager: Brian McCreight • Staff writer: Michael Koresky • Associate editor: Anna Thorngate

AUDIO

Audio supervisor and restoration: Ryan Hullings • Commentary editor: Christopher Ayoub • Commentary recorded at: Molinare TV & Film Ltd., London • Supplemental audio: Gabe Liberti, Trevor Murray, Michael W. Wiese

QUALITY CONTROL/IMAGE RESTORATION

QC and restoration manager: Stéphane Pecharman • QC and restoration: Ilona Auth, Craig Ferrence, Phoebe Harmon, Betsy Jones, Jeffrey Leiser, Eric Luszcz, Maria Palazzola, Cara Shatzman, Giles Sherwood, Russell Smith

B